

Wednesday, 9 April 2014

**ACTU: Abbott's anti-union Royal Commission an attack on Australian Unions designed to deliver political outcomes for the Liberal Government**

The Abbott Government's Royal Commission into unions starting today in Sydney, is a politically motivated witch hunt designed to stop effective unions from making workplaces safer and fighting for decent wages and conditions for workers in Australia.

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver said that Tony Abbott was delivering on a political agenda to damage and weaken the union movement's role in Australian society.

"The Royal Commission has been designed to tie unions up in a long and expensive inquiry that will ultimately make it harder for them to represent their members," Mr Oliver said.

"The Abbott Government is delivering for the radical ideologues that hate unions, hate the important role they play, oppose regulations that protect workers, believe there should be no minimum wage, no rights to unfair dismissal, that don't support the right to collectively bargain, and want to drive down the wages and conditions of Australian workers.

"Mr Abbott hopes this Royal Commission creates a political circus to damage the union movement in order to assist them in attacking the IR system that has protected workers' rights.

"The terms of reference released by Prime Minister Tony Abbott show the narrow focus of the Royal Commission is to smear and damage unions rather than get to the bottom of any genuine issues of corruption.

"We have no confidence that the 'sword will cut both ways' as Mr Abbott has promised and look at the operations of business or their relationship with the Liberal Party and their lobbyists."

Mr Oliver reiterated that there is no place in the union movement for corruption by any union officer or representative and reinforced that any allegations, whether they be against labour hire, building companies or individuals, union or otherwise, should be investigated by police.

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